THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) As per Iodine Deficiency Disorders (IDD) surveys conducted by Directorate General of Health Services, State Health Directorates, Indian Council of Medical Research and other health institutions, no state in the country is free from the problem of iodine deficiency disorders. It is estimated that about 7.1 crore people are suffering from iodine deficiency disorders.

(b) In order to prevent and control the problem of Iodine Deficiency Disorders, the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare is implementing the National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme (NIDDCP) for-merly known as National Goitre Control Programme as 100% centrally assisted scheme in the entire country, lodated salt in place of common edible salt is being supplied to all the states/UTs. The Ministry of Health & FW is also providing financial assistance to all the States/UTs for establishment of an IDD Control Cell and an IDD Monitoring Laboratory for the effective implementation of National IDD Control Programme. Information, Education and Communication activities have also been intensified in all the State and UTs through the Prasar Bharti, All India Radio, Directorate of Field Publicity and Directorate of Advertisement & Visual Publicity, besides allocation of funds to the State Governments for Health Education at the State Level.

(c) At present Government of India is not providing any subsidy on Iodised salt. However, some of the State Governments like Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Orissa etc. have included iodated salt under the Public Distribution System on a limited basis.

**Improving treatment and research**

†3432, PROF. R.B.S. VARMA:
SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are going to formulate a scheme for improving treatment and research in the country;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the progress made in this regard so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (c) Improvement of medical treatment and research facilities is a continuous process within the resources available. Apart from various premier institutes like All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, Jawaherlal Nehru Institute of Post Graduate Medical Education and Research, Pondicherry, National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Surgery, Bangalore involved in providing medical treatment and research facilities, under Pradhan Mantri Swasthaya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY) it has been envisaged to establish six AIIMS like Institutions at Patna, Raipur, Bhopal, Jodhpur, Bhubneshwar and Rishikesh at an outlay of Rs. 280 crores each approximately along with upgradation of 11 medical Institutions with an outlay of Rs. 120 crores each approximately. In addition a number of Government agencies like ICMR, CSIR, ICAR, Department of Bio-Technology, Department of Science and Technology etc. are supporting various programmes and building capacity.

**Medicines from Neem Tree**

3433. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have come across any fresh evidence on uses/ application of neem tree, its formulations, and products made from the tree leaves etc., in more areas; if so, the details thereof indicating the areas of current application as well as the fresh ones;

(b) whether it is a fact that the tree has gained popularity in almost all countries of the world and if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the current position with regard to its patent achieved by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) Neem has been in use for a variety of products for use of man, cattle and for agriculture in India for thousands of years. The plant has been extensively investigated